Plate VIII

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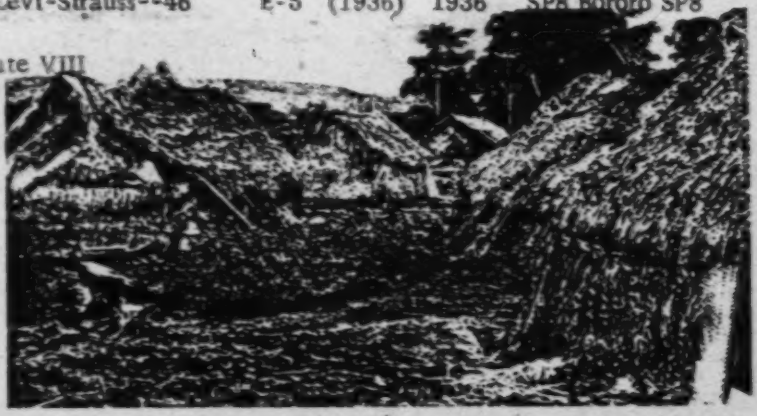

A

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B

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C

/See captions on next page./

1:Lévi-Strauss--46a E-5 (1936) 1936 SP8 Bororo SP8

Plate VIII

Social Organization of the Bororo Indians.

A. The enclosure of the circle of houses.
B. The village present at a ceremony.
C. The large and the small marid'do.

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2:Lowie E-4 (no date) 1946 SP8 Bororo SP8

CULTURE

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

241 114 Whether the tribe farmed prior to white influence is not clear. Von den Steinen (1894) insists that they did not; cultivation, he emphasizes, occurred only along the headwaters of the São Lourenço River, and even there was confined to tobacco, cotton, and gourds used as containers, i. e., to species not serving for food. In a western aldea the growing of manioc and maize noted by Koslowsky (1895 b) seems to have been incipient, since he considered the amount insufficient for a fortnight's sustenance. Colbacchini (1925) denies agriculture but records a myth explaining the origin of maize; and of Baldus' (1936) informants some strongly affirmed and others disputed [178] the cultivation of maize (milho) in earlier times. On the Vermelho River, manioc and maize are planted nowadays, in addition to rice, which is, of course, very recent. 224

At all events, it seems safe to conclude that the *Bororo* were predominantly [222] hunters, gatherers, and fishermen. Typically, a husband would go hunting game in the woods while his wife collected seeds, climbed palms for nuts, and dug up roots with a stick. Women also helped [462] returning hunters by carrying their kill home. Game animals included peccaries (the favorite food), tapirs, jaguars, rabbits, and [756] various birds. Communal hunting expeditions, possibly extending over several weeks, were inspired by medicine men, who indicated [231] the sites for major enterprises. Dogs were originally quite unknown. 226

Fish are caught in nets or weirs, shot with arrows (pl. 86, *bottom*), or drugged. Some are killed with short clubs suspended on the back from a neck-cord. Barbed harpoons are hurled at large fish and caimans.

252 262 **Food preparation.**—Salt was originally unknown.

All game animals are roasted in their skins; only the intestines are [263] boiled. Meat, bones, and nuts are sometimes pounded in a mortar only 16 inches (40 cm.) in height; it has the shape of a decapitated egg, and is planted in the ground. The nuts, either thus pounded [574] or roasted, are mixed with water and stirred into a gruel, which is served to guests.

HOUSES AND VILLAGES

361 In the dry season the *Eastern Bororo* settlements are near the river banks, whence they are shifted to higher ground when the rains set in. Even in temporary encampments the center is occupied by a large [342 345] rectangular house—the men's club, workshop, and ceremonial hall, which likewise serves as the bachelor's dormitory. The family houses, on the other hand, are arranged along the circumference of [184] the circle of which this men's house is the center. Only the *Cabaçaes*

2:Lowie E-4 (no date) 1946 SP8 Bororo SP8

lack this characteristic structure, and even they have as its functional equivalent an enclosed space taboo to women and children.

Among the *Eastern Bororo* the northern and southern halves of the village circle are associated each with one of the moieties and their constituent clans. At Kejara a second principle of dual division appears: besides the axis that separates the northern from the southern moiety there is another perpendicular to the Vermelho River, creating an Upstream and a Downstream half. Here tradition alleges the pristine existence of several concentric house circles, with residences of the same clan behind one another.

The family house type, though always palm-thatched, differs according to the time of year. During the dry season it is of conical shape and erected with a central pole or tree against which other poles lean. In the frame put up for the rainy season, a crossbeam supporting other poles rests on two forked sticks (pls. 83, *bottom;* 84); generally this hut rises directly from the ground, but occasionally it is put on piles. The erection of the residence is a man's duty.

The women within a house belong to the same clan, each family having its own fire, so that every newly married girl acquires a separate fireplace. The furniture includes mats to sit and sleep on, for even outdoors these Indians avoid resting on the bare ground, over which they spread palm leaves or the branches of a tree. However, there are also platform beds rising about 12 to 16 inches (30 to 40 cm.) above the ground and covered with a layer of palm-leaf stems. Mats or skins serve as blankets. Hammocks are unknown. A hut contains pots, spits for roasting, rocks for breaking hard seeds, spindles, and bivalve shells used as spoons and scissors. A mother will put her baby in the central concavity of a mat suspended by four cords from opposite sides, a fifth enabling the woman to rock her infant while she is attending to her chores. In some huts a stage 2 feet 6 inches to 3 feet 6 inches (0.8 to 1 m.) in height serves for roasting fish.

How far the *Western Bororo* mode of settlement conformed to the pattern described is not clear. Koslowsky (1895 b) merely speaks of a Bolivian aldea of some 20 huts with palm-thatched walls and roofs and a mat for the entrance.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

Children go naked. When initiated, a youth acquires a penis sheath, being thus qualified to witness the masquerades customary at funerals. On festive occasions, a decorative pennant is attached to the sheath. Men generally wear a girdle with shell disks, also a necklace of cotton thread, a bone pin in the lower lip, and ear ornaments. The hair is cut horizontally in front (pls. 90, *bottom;* 91); combs are made of bamboo rods held together by cotton plaitwork with designs. Body hair is plucked from the beard, the eyebrows, the pubic region, and the armpits. Women wear a gray perineal band,

2:Lowie E-4 (no date) 1946 SP8 Bororo SP8

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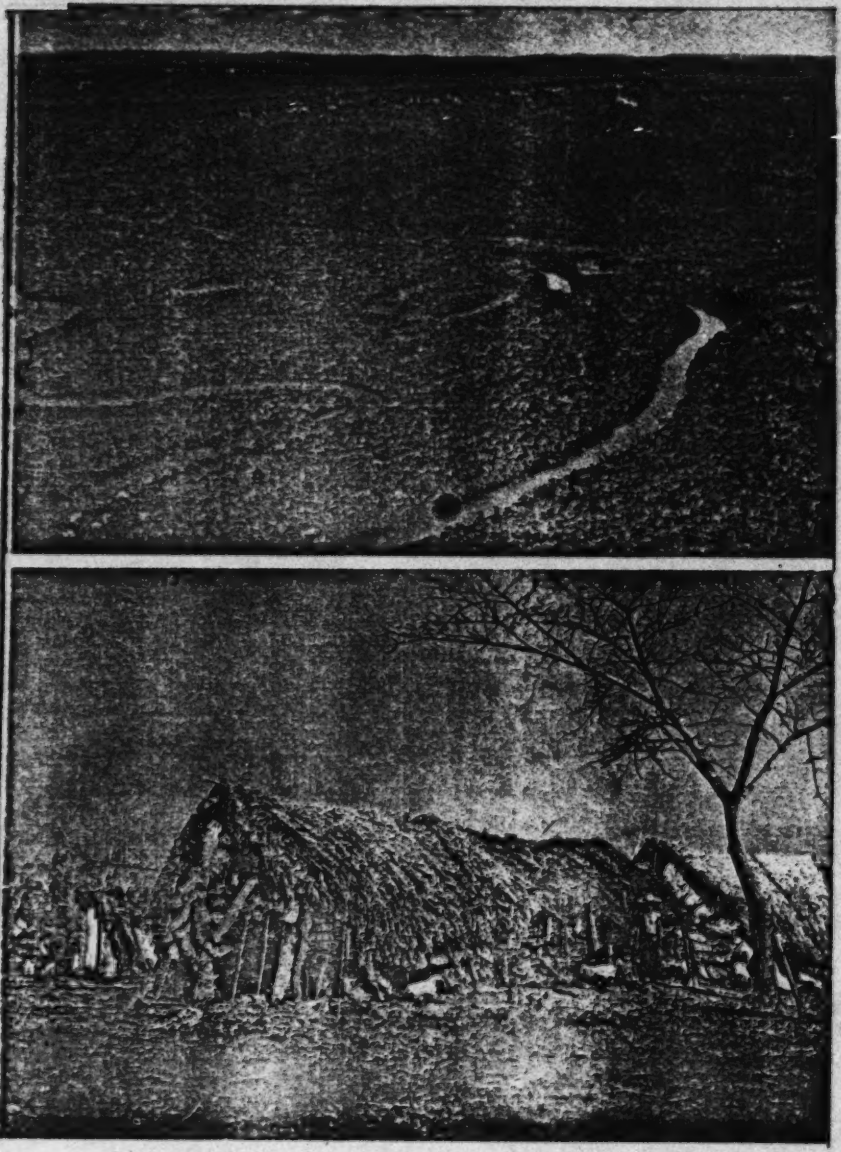

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PLATE 62.—Bororo country and houses. *Top:* Air view of the Chapadão, north of Cuyabá. *Bottom:* Bororo palm-thatched hut. (Courtesy University Museum, Philadelphia.)

[P.432-A]

2:Lowie E-4 (no date) 1946 SP8 Bororo SP8

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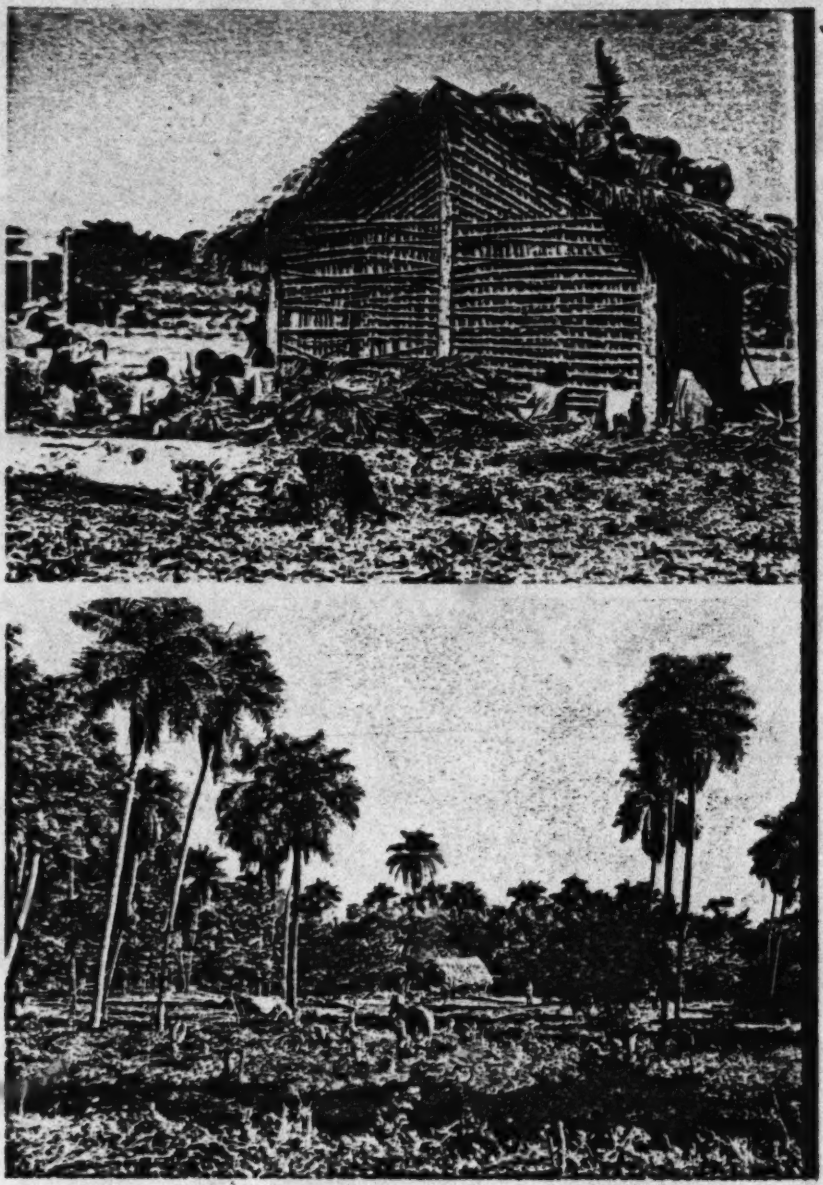

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PLATE 91.—Bororo houses. *Top:* São Lourenço *Bororo* house. *Bottom: Bororo da Campanha* village. (Courtesy University Museum, Philadelphia.)

[p. 432-B]

2:Lowie E-4 (no date) 1946 SP8 Bororo SP8 Kejara

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PLATE II.—Bororo festival at village of Kejara. Top: Dance of the "Maridoa." Bottom: Presentation of the "Maridoa." (Courtesy Claude Lévi-Strauss.)

[p. 432-E]

[Bororo da Campanha]

361

space, a courtyard where the group meets whenever there is anything to discuss or celebrate.

Its inhabitants were miserably poor, not having even manioc farina to offer us, so that we had to await the arrival of our ox cart, which had been left behind, to bring mate, a steer, coffee, and other foods. Our arrival was attended with a slight attempt at some ceremony, but after shaking hands with almost all of the villagers, the reception was over. Listlessness and evident ignorance of how to receive us were the main characteristics, although it was insisted that we sit down, a custom which I found to be prevalent in every group that I visited subsequently.

While waiting for the cart we took the opportunity of looking about. The huts were made of a skeleton of poles covered with burity palm leaves, which in the front of the house were placed vertically, with the leaflets interlaced. They were of a rectangular ground plan, with a true wall, about fifteen feet high. No hammocks were seen, the people sleeping either on the ground or on raised platforms, wooden frames having straps of leather to take the place of a mattress. The huts contained no further furniture. Each family had its own hut.

It was learned that only one woman of the village knew how to make pottery, but that none had been made for many years. In fact, no industry whatsoever has survived, not even the making of feather ornaments.

The bow and arrow has given place to the gun, of which there were several in the village. Acculturation has indeed gone far, the language being almost forgotten even by the older people.

After the arrival of the cart and the distribution of the food was over, they gathered by a fire in front of the headman's hut in two circles, one for the men and one for the women. We were invited to sit with the men. When all was ready, the headman began to sing to the accompaniment of two gourd rattles, which he shook, one with an up-and-down motion and the other both horizontally and vertically with a different rhythm. In turn, his song was taken up by each man. Sometimes the women and the other men would join in a soft chorus. At times, led by the oldest woman in the tribe, the women would suddenly stand up and begin hopping, holding the legs together stiffly, the arms sideward but horizontally, and, with the hopping, leaning first to one side and then the other. This was enjoyed by them, especially by the older women. Several times chicha was passed around. Undoubtedly the song and dance

Mature women, when menstruating, wear black loin cloths. For the first time the boy is shown the aije (bull-roarers) and the other secret ceremonies forbidden to women and children. He is also spatially leaving the women's domain; he is moving to the men's house. As he was born in the jungle, moved to the village and named, now he is passing from the periphery of the village to its center. Before the initiation ceremony, the sisters of his yorubodare pluck out all his body hair, for hair is an animal characteristic. He is made to jump over a fire. Cooking is a cultural process, and the boys in the initiation ceremonies are made cultural by being "cooked." When the decision for an initiation ceremony has been made, the men say, "Let us cook the boys" (pawo ipare ekowu).

Marriage is an anticlimax. The alliance with the other moiety has already been confirmed by the initiation ceremony; sexual needs are well attended to by the female associates in the men's house (Crocker 1969: 236-260) and by casual affairs, and now one must move again to the periphery, at least during the night. The continuity of the society must be assured; but it is not a thing to brag of, to extol with ceremonies, or to be proud of.

Finally death. The number and the meaning of funeral ceremonies lasting a month and a half and the number of songs, ornaments, food exchanges, and maternal lamentations would require the space of another book. With death a man's passage from one moiety to another is completed. He himself becomes the ancestor of the other moiety which he has im-

5: Baldus--46 E-4, 5 (1934-1935) 1937 SP8 Bororo SP8
Eastern Bororo

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9: Eastern Bororo: houses of Indians of Meruri

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10: Eastern Bororo: little family with the Padre Diretor /Director Priest/ in Meruri.

7:Cook M-3 (1900-1901) 1907
SP8 Bororo SP8

[facing p. 50]

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291

BORORO HOUSE, BRAZIL

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INTERIOR OF BORORO HOUSE, BRAZIL

8:Cook M-3 (1900-1901) 1909
SP8 Bororo SP8

its obscure heart an exact image of anything it winks at, must be some wicked device of the *bopi*—demons. The savage believes that any one having his picture may practice some black art over it and bring evil upon the original: that, as one may do what he wishes with the image, he likewise has power over the real man. Moreover, if one is such a powerful conjurer that he can secure that image, What may he not do with the original? I had to bribe them with valuable gifts in order to secure a number of pictures.

The Bororó, like other South American tribes, dwell in gloomy palm-branch huts that resemble squatty, old haystacks huddled together in complete disorder in the coarse grass and among the scraggy trees of the upland jungle. They are constructed by first planting two posts in the ground twenty or thirty feet apart, ten feet high, and terminating in a fork, to support the ridge pole, which is held in position by means of creepers from the forest, instead of nails. Against the ridge pole, are reclined and bound, the rafters, the feet of which are sunk slightly in the ground and the upper ends are bound to the ridge pole. Bamboo poles are next bound horizontally to these rafters, while upright stakes are set in at the gables; and finally, to the entire frame-work, are bound huge, feather-shaped palm-branches, to shed the rain, and exclude the light because of the flies. The primitive residence is now complete. The only light that enters is what filters through the palm-branches. To enter, one pushes aside the palm-branches at one end and enters in a stooping position.

These strange, uncouth dens of savagery, are dark, unclean, and ill-smelling, and so devoid of every object considered absolutely essential to a civilized human abode, that it is difficult to comprehend that they are the dwellings of true human beings—the homes of multitudes of real men, women and children; where they are born, reared and pass their days, and the only abodes they have ever known. Entering one of these human lairs, we find it more or less strewn with decaying food refuse, such as bones and other rejected parts of fish, mammals, birds and reptiles; shells, stones and peelings

Brazil.

342 364 from fruits and vegetables, besides chips and other débris from weapon and ornament making. Like infants, they simply drop, wherever they happen to be, such parts of the food they are eating as they do not want.

352 [285] There is no household furniture, as we understand it, in these primitive residences. Mats, made by braiding together the long, slender leaves of palm-branches, are spread upon the ground to serve as beds, tables, chairs, and sofas. Cala- 415 bash and gourd shells of various shapes and sizes, and large, oyster-like shells, found in the woods, are the pans, basins, bowls, bottles, cups, plates and spoons, furnished by Nature, [323] ready for use. A few clay pots are the only vessels the 354 Bororó have which are made by their own hands. The "stove" is a light fire made by placing the ends of small 352 sticks together like spokes of a wheel. The "pantry" is a 251 little platform of sticks five feet directly above the fire, supported by four stakes, upon which is placed the food that cannot be eaten at once in order that it may be preserved by the smoke. Palm-nuts are also heaped up here. Stuck 353 around in the roof and hanging from it, are seen the primitive weapons of war and of the chase, such as bows and various kinds of spear-like arrows, fishing gear, several kinds of small, home-made baskets, feather and bone ornaments, charms, and ceremonial paraphernalia. The primitive house- 252 keeper is seen squatting or kneeling, engaged in the preparation of some insipid broth in a clay pot over the little fire, or else splitting goose-egg cocoanuts and pulverizing the meats in a rude mortar with which to make a kind of bread. The 462 head of the household kneels, or sits cross-legged, on a palm- 352 leaf mat occupied in making bows and arrows or ornaments, 516 or repairing fishing-tackle; or else lying full-length on his 857 mat with a five-inch pole for a pillow, on which the neck rests, and nibbling a bit of jungle food; while the children are seen, either assisting the mother in her culinary operations, or amusing themselves in a quiet way just outside the hut. 000 Not a patch of "dry goods" has ever entered this human

8:Cook M-3 (1900-1901) 1909
SP8 Bororo SP8

abode, and the entire family, as previously stated, is virtually in a state of nature.

When the primitive residence becomes so unsanitary that even the barbarous occupants cannot longer endure it, they erect a new hut a short distance from the old one and move into it, burning, or merely abandoning the old dwelling. No dray is needed to move such a household, and the packing up is very simple, for the housewife can gather up in a few minutes and carry in one load the entire possessions of the family. At wide intervals of time, the entire population of the primitive city moves out, constructs another cluster of huts on a new site, then burns the old city. This is their method of house-cleaning and of city sanitation. Instead of removing the garbage, they remove the town, or, at least, change their residence. There is no sweeping, dusting, washing, scrubbing, ironing, mending, dress-making, or washing to do in these primitive abodes. The over-burdened civilized housekeeper must admit that primitive housekeeping is not destitute of advantages. One to four families dwell in a hut, each having their own little camp-fire, or *kitchen*, for, in a limited sense, at least, they do not believe in having "two cooks in one kitchen."

In every Bororó encampment, or village, there is one very large hut around which all the family huts cluster. This hut is called the *baihýtu*—great hut—while a small, family dwelling is called a *bai*. This great hut is a public building, or a sort of town hall where all public functions occur. It is also a bachelors' hall where all the single men of the village reside; a kind of club-house or hotel; the village workshop where the men do the most of their weapon and ornament making; and, finally, the public brothel. No female of the tribe is permitted to enter this primitive "house of mirth" save at night for immoral purposes, or to participate in funeral ceremonies.

Some Brazilian tribes, instead of having many small huts in each of which two or three families, only, reside, erect one very large hut, one or two hundred feet long and seventy-

/449 cont./

122 only with grass. A single, but tall tree stood beside the little brook, whose banks were lined with many young buritf palms. It required courage to live and work here. Except for the farm walls at S. José, scarcely anything along the way reminded one of the struggles with the Bororó. Only we were occasionally struck by low, narrow arbors which had been made by putting together dwarfed sertão trees; they were attributable to the soldiers and had served for protection during the night. On 19 March, across terribly desolate grassy areas, we reached the first brooks flowing toward the S. Lourenço, which were as yet only a few meters wide. On the Ribeirão Prata we found a charming little landscape, which, with its woods and succulent meadow and the silver ribbon of the little source stream, vividly recalled our home to us. Only a few young palm trees argued against this, and the thermometer, which stubbornly measured 22.8° for the very refreshing, "ice-cold" water. On 21 March there followed the descent from the plateau terrace past picturesque red sandstone rocks, and in the afternoon we reached the orange groves of the military colony, where the beautiful forest-edged S. Lourenço flowed past at a width of 127 meters. We were very hospitably received by the commander, Captain Serejo.

361 On the next day we arrived at Thereza Christina. It is situated upstream, also on the right bank and not far below where the Prata empties, but the S. Lourenço makes great bends between the two colonies and the forest area is so swampy that one is forced to make a long detour inland.

[342] Above a bank a few meters high, an extensive forest clearing; on the open place covered with dry weeds, many massive old tree trunk still standing, and here and there hewn trunks lying about, a great many low, rectangular, in part long huts with gable roofs covered with palm straw which begin just above the door; everything prosaic and cheerless in the same grayish-yellow shade of straw and loam, surrounded by forest on three sides, the fourth bordered by a majestic, wide stream and beyond it a dark strip of luxuriant forest, above which appears an extended chain of flat hills -- that was Thereza Christina.

/450 cont./

361 Arrangement of the colony. The principal building of the colony had as its groundplan a long, very narrow rectangle. It consisted of a number of rooms with stamped loam floor, loam-plastered paneled walls, and a low straw-roof; the doors all opened out on the same side facing the main plaza. The furniture was limited to tables, chairs, and chests. On one end was Duarte's one-window room without a door to the outside; then came the room where meals were eaten, where Caldas sometimes taught school in the morning, and where people gathered generally, with a door to the plaza and also an opposite one leading out to the rear, to the left the entrance to Duarte's room and to the right the door to a supply room in which alcoholic spirits were kept and the key to which played an important part in dealings with the Indians. There then followed, with doors to the plaza, the cadêa /jail/, a small detention room for the soldiers, which was always occupied and the inhabitant of which was obliged to spend the day in the hammock, a room for Eliseo and the administrator, and supply rooms. The apothecary had his well-stocked poison-kitchen in a little house by himself which lay a few steps /451/ opposite. The soldiers lived in small ranchos, some of them toward the river, some on the edge of the forest.
[342] Round about lay the Indian huts, like gabled roofs standing on the ground, six paces wide, ten to 13 paces long; they afforded protection against the sun and to some extent against rain, left nothing to be desired in the way of simplicity, and served as an abode for one family each.

345 In the center of the colony a large area was left free; here stood the so-called ranchão, namely, large rancho or baitó of the Indians, cf. Plate 25 /see p. 552/, ten paces wide and 26 paces long. It, too, was built without any skill, though with the help of the soldiers; the longitudinal sides consisted of poles which were covered carelessly with palm leaves and were so far apart that one could enter almost anywhere; the transverse sides were even more open. The illustration shows the Indians busy repairing the roof with palm branches. The bachelors worked and slept in the baitó; it was also the center for all festivities,

4: Oberg E-5 (1949)1953
SP17 Nambicuara
Bororo Sp8

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR HABITAT

The Umotina, who call themselves the Balorié, are settled today in the Indian Post of Fraternidade Indigena near Barra do Bugre on the Paraguay River west of Cuiabá. Before coming to the Post they occupied a village at Tira Santida just below Tres Barras. The Umotina, who today number about 65, are related linguistically to the Bororo who live directly to the east of them. In two respects, at least, they differ sharply from their neighbors—they have a pure Hawaiian-type kinship system and are pronouncedly dolichocephalic. The local Brazilians call them the Barbados, owing to their beardedness.

In the old days the village (*muktmo*) was built on the bank of a river and consisted of two rows of houses separated by a narrow plaza. The house (*ishipá*) was rectangular with a gabled roof coming down to the ground, the whole being covered with pacova palm fronds except the two ends which were left open. This house type is the same as that formerly found among the Guató who live to the south of the Umotina. Each family had its own house, the occupants sleeping on mats spread on the ground. The husband kept a fire going all night not only for warmth but also to drive away the mosquitoes.

In the past men wore no clothes but after puberty used a penis sheath (*bakyotókwa*) made from a buriti palm leaf. The foreskin was pulled over the glans, and the leaf was wound around it and fastened with twine, the purpose being to hide the end of the penis from the women. Men wore their hair long, tied in a knot at the back of their heads, and allowed their beards to grow; but eyebrows, eyelashes, and pubic hair were plucked out. The lobes of the ears and the lower lip were pierced. Women, on the other hand, cut their hair short, and plucked out their eyebrows and eyelashes but not their pubic hair. Women wore a knee-length skirt (*imetá*) made from woven cotton. Like the men, the women had their ear lobes pierced.

[p. 106 (B)]